

Cooking

with

Uncle

Bob



a collection of recipes by Bob Schieser















# Cooking with Uncle Bob

a collection of recipes by Bob Schires



*I have begged, borrowed, or stolen many of these recipes from someone else; feel free to use them. Nearly all of them have been tweaked in one way or another, and they are all passed along to you in the same form that I use them at the restaurant.*

*-Bob Schirer*

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*The building on the cover drawing is of a country school in Geneso, Kansas called Pleasant Hill School (District 61). The school was moved to Lyons years ago and after several changes, it is now Schirer's Restaurant.*



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## *Cooking with Uncle Bob*

I first met Bob Schirer several years ago when my wife and I were engaged in a desperate effort to carve a livelihood from our own restaurant. During those five harried years, Bob would occasionally show up to have lunch at our daily buffet. At the time, I knew him only as one of our competitors, the owner of Schirer's Restaurant, on the north edge of Lyons. Yet, he never acted like a competitor. He was always friendly, kind and supportive. Nor, did he criticize our methods – despite the fact he was well-qualified to do so. After all, we were bona fide novices, and Bob had more than 30 years of cooking behind him.

Ask just about anyone in Rice County, Kansas about Bob Schirer, and they'll know who you're talking about. And, I'll bet you they mention his bread – or, his pies. Bob is something of an institution in these parts, and people have been crowding into Schirer's Restaurant most weekday evenings and after church on Sundays for about 27 years now.

There are a lot of people who grew up eating Bob's food – just as there are many who earned their first dollar working in Schirer's kitchen or waiting tables on the restaurant floor (including my own niece and nephew). And, there are many others who themselves learned how to cook under Bob's tutelage - including high school 4-H'ers and vocational-technical students at the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory. Bob even shared his culinary knowledge with his seventh grade students during the three years he taught junior high English.

"One year, my seventh grade boys were great hunters," he says. "I challenged them to get the game, and I would fix a Thanksgiving dinner. We had quail, pheasant, goose, duck and, of course, the traditional turkey. We had a great feast."



*That episode encapsulates Bob's whole approach to food and cooking. Yes, he loves to experiment, to create, to please the palate. But, Bob loves people even more.*

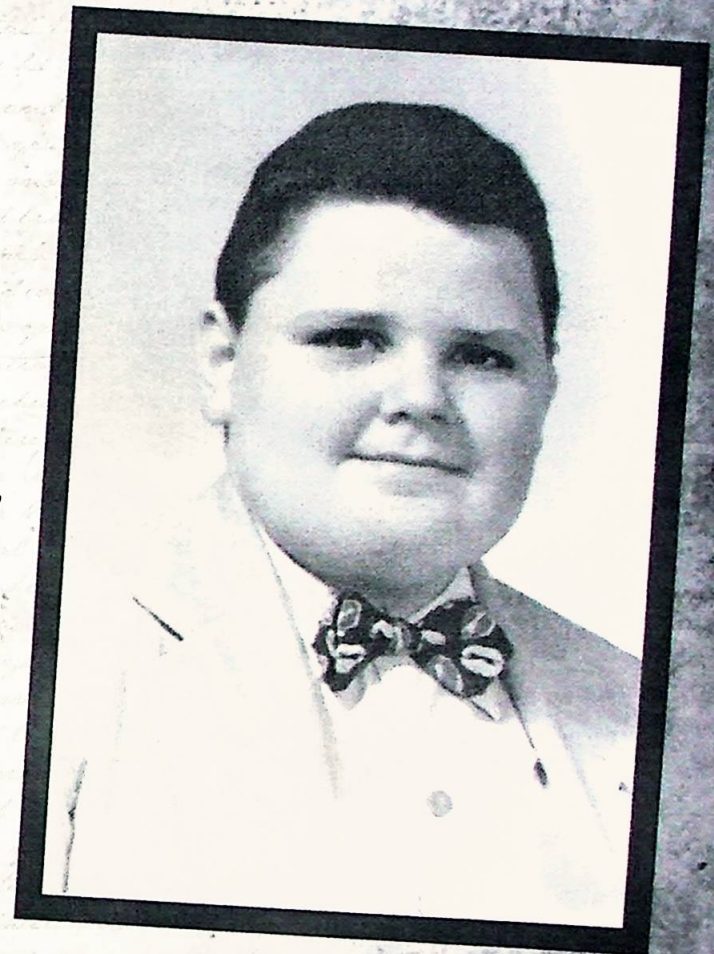
*For Bob, preparing and sharing food is all about relationship. And community. And connection.*

*"That's what makes me want to cook," he says. "It reminds me of the people I love, the people who taught me about life."*

*Every recipe in this book has a story, some more emotionally-linked than others. What's more, every recipe is connected to a person and tethered to a place, primarily central Kansas. Simply put, these are recipes for good food – plain and simple. It's the kind of food we remember from childhood, when family relationships and abiding friendships were the truest stars in our universe. This is food for fellowship and family gatherings – fodder for future memories. This is food for life, in its fullest sense.*

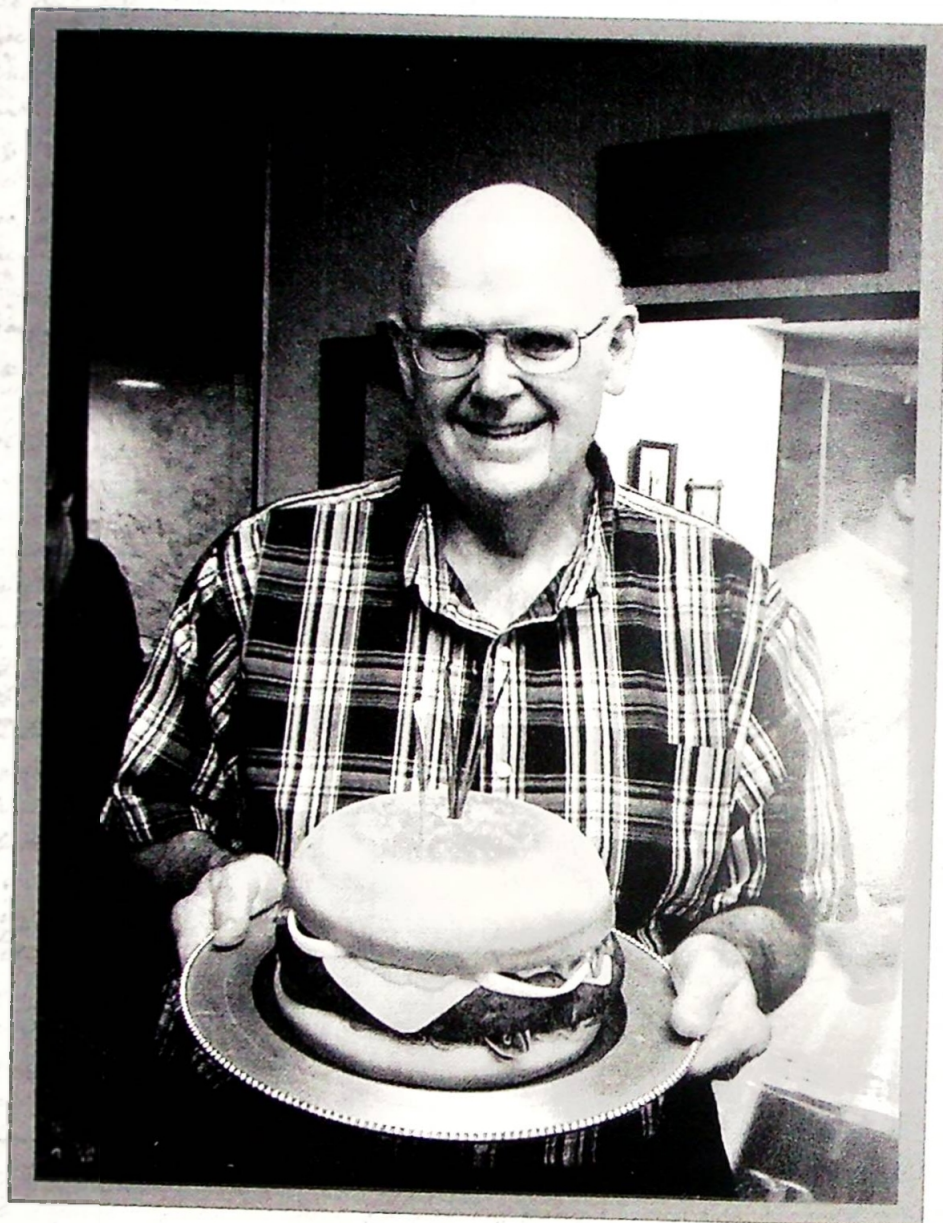
Shane Schneider  
Lyons, Kansas  
2009

**Me in 5th grade, 1954**





**Melvin and Janet Splitter  
gave me this cake for my  
65th birthday. I catered  
the rehearsal dinner for  
their son at Schirer's  
Restaurant.**





# What about Bob?

*by Shane Schneider*

Bob Schirer commenced his cooking career rather ingloriously – by blowing up his mother's Roper Range. His motive was sincere enough; he simply wanted to bake her a birthday cake. It was December 1954, and 10-year-old Bobby had crawled out of bed around five o'clock that morning so he could surprise Faye Schirer with a freshly-baked chocolate cake, courtesy of her youngest boy.

As his parents slept soundly in the bedroom above the kitchen, Bobby sneaked downstairs and turned a knob that started feeding gas to the propane oven. He lit the match, placed it in the oven, and shut the door so it could heat. He then spent about ten minutes gathering his ingredients, mixing them, and pouring the batter into a greased 9-inch by 13-inch baking pan. He patiently spread the batter evenly in the pan with the back of a wooden spoon. Pleased with his work, he grabbed the pan and opened the oven door.

But the oven was still cold. Bobby was puzzled; it should have been plenty warm by now. He peered inside and saw there was no blue flame illuminating the stove's interior. So, he lit another match.

Fortunately, no one was hurt. The explosion did, however, blow open the doors of the oven and send the 10-year-old flying across the room. Dust from under the range slowly settled to the kitchen floor. The next thing Bob remembers is the sight of his dad, clad in his union suit, surveying the damage with a mixture of fear, disbelief and wonder.

"What happened?" Clarence asked his son.

"The stove blew up," said Bobby.

If we wanted to nail it down more precisely, we could say Bob's 50-plus year cooking career actually started months earlier, when he joined 4-H. As a farm kid, it was perfectly natural that he should join the organization; nearly everyone he knew did. It was, however, slightly out of the ordinary to choose cooking as one of his first projects.



"The course was called 'Simple Desserts and Beverages', and we were taught to make cookies, cakes and refreshing drinks that first year of the project," Bob recalls. "Later, I graduated to courses like 'Helping with Dinner' and 'Helping with Supper'".

The highlight of Bob's 4-H involvement occurred when he was 15 years old and his loaf of bread won the Grand Champion ribbon at the Harvey County Fair. The event dealt a great blow to the pride of the senior girls who had entered their own breads. Being out-baked by a sophomore boy was a tad hard to swallow, and many of them remember the indignity to this day.

The Harvey County 4-H chapter may have introduced Bob to cooking, but he nurtured his passion for it at home, in the Schirer family kitchen. That kitchen was in a farmhouse, located about five and a half miles southwest of Newton, and Bob shared it with his parents and six siblings. They were an ordinary rural Kansas family, of German descent, hard-working and close-knit. His father, Clarence, was a farmer, and Faye was a typical farm wife.

"My mom was my first and best teacher," says Bob. "I would practice cooking in the kitchen, while she sewed in the living room. Her first response to any question I asked was, 'What does the recipe say?' If I couldn't find the answer in the recipe book, she'd provide direction. But, she never hovered over me while I cooked. She was definitely not a hoverer."

Perhaps she was preparing him to be a self-sufficient cook, a lifelong learner, an epicurean experimenter. For, though he would eventually leave the farmstead, he would never stray far from his passion for cooking. It was always present, woven into the fabric of his life – with each person who crossed his path adding a thread here, a yarn there.

While majoring in English at Sterling College, he worked in the cafeteria, serving eggs to his fellow students for breakfast and freshly baked rolls for supper. After graduating, he taught middle school English in Stockton while moonlighting as a fry cook in Plainville on Wednesday nights. Unable to resist his passion, he gave up teaching after four years and returned to Sterling College to work as the assistant cafeteria manager.

After three years of that, he took a position with the Central Kansas Area Vo-Tech, teaching cooking to inmates of the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory. Those inmates, by the way, taught him how to make a mouth-watering macaroni and cheese casserole. Three years later, he was running his own restaurant – first, the Village Café in Alden (1979-1982); then, Schirer's Restaurant in Lyons (1982-present).

At his side for most of his restaurant career was Viola, the "home economics teacher-turned librarian" he married in 1976.



*"Viola was a great help to me; she taught me how to season foods correctly," he says. "Together, we created a nice little restaurant that, for the most part, supported us well. To help make ends meet, I also took jobs as a food service director in a couple local nursing homes - but I learned from those experiences, too. The elderly residents taught me how to put a good meal together; they don't abide short cuts."*

*In 2000, about five months before their 25th wedding anniversary, Viola passed away following a long illness. He married Betty Williams in 2001 and continues to operate Schirer's Restaurant as he has for the last nearly three decades. Although health issues have forced him to slow down a bit, Bob can still be found most Saturday mornings baking bread in the restaurant kitchen in preparation for the supper crowd.*

*Bob likes to say "There's nothing original in these recipes." And, strictly speaking, he's right. That's not to say, though, that these recipes aren't his own. Each dish, each flavor, each unique concoction emerged from a memory, a friendship, a shared experience. These recipes are Bob's legacy, the accoutrements of a life dedicated to the joyful art of cooking. They are also Faye's legacy, Viola and Leo's legacy, Florence and Mabelle's and the many others you'll meet in these pages who have helped make Bob the cook - and the human being - he is today.*

*No man is an island - even if that island is surrounded by brown sauce seasoned with a half-cup of apricot preserves and a dash of cloves.*

Cooking with Uncle Bob

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you.

-8-



# Mom's Bread

*If bread is the Staff of Life, it's only fitting that this cookbook should lead off with a recipe by the woman who gave me life, Faye Schirer.*

*Yes, this is my mother's bread recipe, and I share it with you because it symbolizes the whole idea behind this book – that sharing food is a spiritual experience. I pass these recipes along to you who have been my friends, my family, and my community for multiple decades now. Thank you for your love and friendship.*

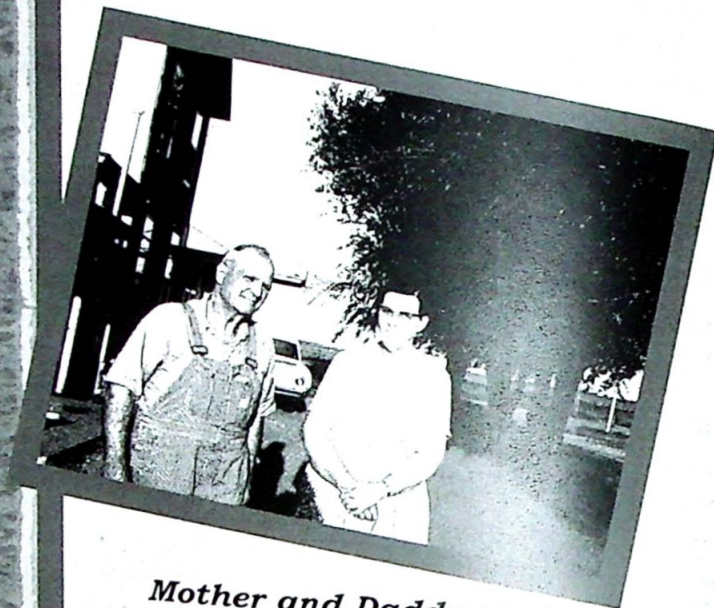
*Now, let us break bread together.*



*Cooking with Uncle Bob*



Mother and Daddy's wedding  
picture  
1928



Mother and Daddy at the  
farm with new '64 Ford  
1964



## *Mom's Bread*

*My mother gave me this recipe; she was my most influential teacher. I was only 15 years old when I won the purple ribbon in the 4-H division at our county fair with this bread. Thanks to Mom, who taught me how to read a recipe, I beat out all the senior girls for a trip to the Kansas State Fair. Those girls still remember it, too.*

*1 1/2 cups tepid water (around 110 degrees)  
1 cup granulated sugar  
2 1/2 Tbsp. kosher salt  
1 cup oil  
12 cups unbleached flour  
8 cups whole wheat flour  
8 Tbsp. instant yeast*

*Place all ingredients in a 20-quart bowl in the order listed. Mix on low speed until well incorporated and dough leaves the sides of the bowl. Then, mix on medium speed and let it knead for 5 minutes. Let it rise until it doubles in bulk. Punch it down and divide equally into 10 loaves. Place in well-greased bread pans and let it rise until it doubles.*

*Bake at 375 degrees for 25 minutes. Move from pans to wire racks and let cool.*

Cooking with Uncle Bob

I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you.

-12-



# Sunday Fare

One of the working titles for this book was "Farm Cookin'". That's because these recipes reflect my upbringing on a farm in rural Newton. Like many Kansans of my generation, I have farming roots, and that's why many of you will also relate to these dishes.

If you're a Kansan – or, from a farm family – I wouldn't be surprised if you've tasted most of these recipes. More than likely, you first encountered them after church on a Sunday afternoon or at a big family gathering at Grandma's house.

I can vouch that these recipes are tried and true, because countless customers at Schirer's Restaurant have paid for them every Sunday for nearly 30 years.

*Notes:*

## *Baked Chicken Salad*

I know - baked chicken salad? But, it really is delicious. This recipe was one of Viola's, but I don't know where she came across it. I can say that it was in her recipe box when we married in 1976.

4 cups of diced cooked chicken  
¾ cup mayonnaise  
¾ cup cream of chicken soup  
2 cups chopped celery  
4 hard cooked eggs, sliced  
1 tsp. kosher salt  
1 tsp. finely minced onion  
2 Tbsp. lemon juice  
2 Tbsp. chopped pimiento  
1 cup crushed potato chips  
2/3 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1/3 cup sliced almonds

Mix the first 8 ingredients in a large bowl. Place in a large shallow baking dish. Mix the last 3 ingredients and sprinkle over the top. Chill in refrigerator overnight. Bake at 400 degrees until heated through.

I double this recipe and it fits nicely in a 2 inch steam-table pan. This makes 16 servings.



*Notes:*

## *Baked Herb Chicken*

*This is another of Viola's recipes. She was especially fond of it because she could put all the ingredients together and keep it in the refrigerator overnight before cooking.*

*36 - 6 oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts  
10 Tbsp. lemon juice  
2 ½ tsp. kosher salt  
1 ¼ tsp. dried sweet basil  
1 ¼ tsp. dried oregano  
1 Tbsp. grated lemon rind  
1 - 46 oz. can cream of mushroom soup*

*Combine the last 6 ingredients and spoon over chicken breasts that have been placed into 3 lightly oiled 2 inch steam table pans. Bake uncovered at 325 degrees until tender and lightly browned, approximately 1 and ½ hours.*

*Notes:*

*Chicken Rochester*

One of my salesmen gave me the original recipe for this dish years ago. As with most of the recipes I've accumulated over the years, I altered it a bit to suit my own style. The recipe initially called for folding the chicken breast around the dried beef, then wrapping the breast with bacon. I figured it was easier to just add the bacon and dried beef to the sauce.

30 - 6 oz. boneless skinless chicken breasts  
1 - 46 oz. can cream of chicken soup  
1 - 46 oz. can cream of mushroom soup  
4 cups sour cream  
1 tsp. grated nutmeg  
2 - pkgs. thinly sliced dried beef, diced  
½ lb. pure bacon bits

Mix all ingredients except chicken breasts in a large bowl. Grill chicken breasts on the charbroiler just long enough to create marks on them. Place chicken breasts in the lightly oiled 4 inch steamtable pan putting sauce between each layer of chicken. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator overnight. The next day remove plastic wrap and cover with foil and bake for 2 ½ to 3 hours at 350 degrees.



Notes:

## Creamy Baked Chicken Breasts

Here's an example of how absentmindedness can be a good thing. I was doing my prep work in the kitchen at Schirer's one Saturday morning, when I realized I was short of 46 oz. cans of cream of chicken soup. I needed it for my Creamy Baked Chicken Breasts, so I ran to the grocery store to pick up a couple family-sized cans.

I must not have been paying attention, though, because I picked up two cans of chicken and rice soup by mistake. I didn't notice my error until I got back to the restaurant, so - since I was short on time - I crossed my fingers and added them to the dish.

As it turned out, this version is much better. Sometimes, it pays not to pay attention.

30 - 6 oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts

Flour for dredging

Oil for browning

Dredge the breasts in flour and brown in oil on the grill.

Sauce:

2 - 46 ounce cans cream of chicken soup

2 - family size cans chicken and rice soup

½ Tbsp. nutmeg or curry powder or a little of both

Mix all ingredients together and layer with browned chicken breasts in a 4 inch steamtable pan or electric roaster. Cover pan with foil and bake for approximately 3 hours at 350 degrees.

*Notes:*

## *Glazed Cornish Hens*

Sterling College professor Leo Lawless was a lifelong friend, my piano teacher and one of the most interesting people I have known. A bachelor, he resided at "Garlow", a renovated garage he lovingly named as though it were an English country manor.

Leo was a marvelous gourmet cook, with a delightful sense of humor; I ate many meals at his table. This recipe is one of his own.

I first served it Christmas 1992, for a large group of Methodist clergy. It went over extremely well - lots of Amens.

2 whole Cornish hens, washed and patted dry  
1 cup herbed stuffing mix  
1 ½ cups water  
2 Tbsp melted butter

Combine mix, water and butter. Stuff hens.

Sauce:

1 envelope brown gravy mix  
½ cup water  
½ cup apricot preserves  
Dash of ground cloves

Bring mixture to a boil. Place hens in a small roasting pan, and pour the mixture over them. Roast uncovered at 350 degrees for one hour. Baste every 15 minutes.



*Notes:*

## *Glazed Ham Raisin Balls*

Kudos to Viola again. She taught high school home economics - so she came by her recipe collecting naturally.

5 lbs. ground ham  
5 lbs. ground fresh pork  
10 cups raisin bran flakes  
10 eggs  
4 - 12 oz. cans evaporated milk  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup + 2 Tbsp. finely chopped onion  
1 tsp. each of salt, pepper, and thyme  
Mix thoroughly. Shape into balls.  
Glaze  
2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups brown sugar  
5 tsp. dry mustard  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup + 2 Tbsp. cider vinegar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup + 2 Tbsp. water

Place glaze ingredients in saucepan and bring to a boil.

Place hamballs into a lightly oiled 2" steamtable pan. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Spoon glaze over balls. Bake for about 20-30 minutes more. During the last baking, baste one or two more times. The hamballs can be made any size (I would suggest the size of an ice cream scoop). This will make about 25-30 servings.

## *Hawaiian Ham Loaf*

This is one of Grace's recipes. She was Viola's mother, and to the best of my knowledge, she didn't get it in Hawaii. If I recall correctly, Grace read the recipe in the newspaper and drove immediately to the grocery store.

She purchased all the ingredients, went back home and prepared the food. Then she invited company over for supper.

2 - 20 oz. cans crushed pineapple, drained - reserve juice

5 lbs. ground ham

5 lbs. ground fresh pork

8 eggs

4 cups milk

1 lb. (4 sleeves) saltine crackers, crushed

Mix the above ingredients together in a 20 quart mixer. Place mixture into a 4 inch lightly oiled steamtable pan. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 3 hours. Baste every 30 minutes with the following glaze.

Glaze

Reserved pineapple juice

1 cup brown sugar

2 Tbsp. prepared mustard

1 cup cider vinegar

Mix ingredients in a saucepan and heat to boiling, stirring occasionally.



**Viola's and my wedding  
1976**



## *Italian Meat Loaf*

10 lbs. good ground beef (80-85% lean)  
4 sleeves saltine crackers, crushed  
4 cups spaghetti sauce  
4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese  
8 eggs  
1 Tbsp. Kosher salt

In a 20 qt. electric mixer combine all ingredients except ground beef. Add ground beef and mix until all ingredients are well combined. Place mixture in a lightly oiled 4 inch steam-table pan. Pat evenly in pan and divide in two lengthwise. Cover loaf with about 3 extra cups of spaghetti sauce and bake in a 375 degree oven for about 2½ hours. Sprinkle extra mozzarella cheese on top of the loaf the last 5 minutes of baking.

*Notes:*

*Notes:*

*Polynesian Chicken Breasts*

48 - 5 oz. chicken breasts  
Dried onion flakes  
Kosher salt

Place the chicken breasts in 2- 2" lightly oiled steam table pans. Sprinkle with salt and dried onion flakes.

Mix together:  
4 cups French dressing  
4 cups peach, apricot, or apple pie filling  
4 envelopes dried onion soup mix

Pour half of this mixture over each pan of chicken.  
Bake at 350 degrees for 1¼ to 1½ hours.



*Notes:*

## *Sweet and Sour Pork Chops*

24 - 6 oz. pork chops

Dried onion flakes

Kosher salt

Place the pork chops in 2- 2 inch lightly oiled steam table pans. Sprinkle with salt and dried onion flakes.

Mix together:

4 cups French dressing

4 cups peach, apricot, or apple pie filling

4 envelopes dried onion soup mix

Pour half of this mixture over each pan of pork. Bake at 300 degrees for at least 2 hours or until juices run clear.

*Notes:*

*Smothered Steak*

This is another result of my incessant experimentation. I've cooked a lot of smothered steaks over the last 30 years, and this one has the best flavor of them all.

30 - 6 oz. chicken fry (minute) steaks

Flour for dredging

Oil for browning

Dredge steaks in flour and brown in a little oil on the grill.

Sauce:

2 - 46 oz. cans cream of mushroom soup

1 - box (2 pkg.) dry onion soup mix

6 cups (approximately) left over roast beef gravy

Mix all ingredients together and layer with browned steaks in a 4 inch steam table pan or an electric roaster. Cover steam table pan with foil and bake at 350 degrees for 2½ - 3 hours.



*Notes:*

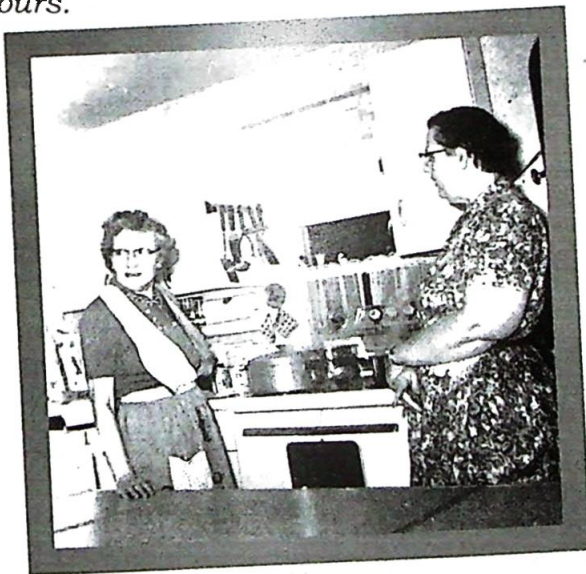
## *Sunday Chicken*

Here it is - the old standby. Who doesn't like chicken for Sunday dinner? I found this recipe in the waiting room of the doctor's office. There I was, trying to pass the time by leafing through old magazine issues, when I spotted it. As always, I tweaked it a bit to make it my own.

This chicken is perfect for any Sunday get-together.

12 - 6 oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts  
2 - 10.5 oz. cans cream of chicken soup  
2 cups sour cream  
1 pkg. dry onion soup mix

Place chicken in a lightly oiled 2 inch steam table pan. Mix other ingredients together and pour over chicken. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 1½ hours.



**Mother (right)  
Aunt Freida  
in Freida's  
Illinois kitchen**

## Cooking with Uncle Bob



# *My Specialty*

*Mmmm. Pie.*

*Over the years, my pies have earned something of a reputation as a Schirer's "specialty." I'll let you decide how worthy they are of such a distinction. I will say, however, that these pies are for cooks of nearly every skill – and energy level. Some are labor intensive; others are less so.*

*Regardless of the level of difficulty, they all taste good. Each works well for entertaining, be it an afternoon tea or a fancy reception. They're also a great way to top off a large, satisfying meal of Sunday Fare.*

*Notes:*

# *Pie Crust*

A good pie must have a great crust - and, the question posed to me most often over the years is "Bob, how do you make your crust? What's your secret?"

My first wife, Viola, discovered this recipe in the food section of the Hutchinson News many years ago. The food editor had shared her recipe for Sky High Strawberry Pie and this was the crust she used. It's also the crust I use - with one major revision. Butter flavored oil is the only oil I use. It's essential.

This recipe can be used for both the top and bottom pie crust.

(8 CRUSTS)

12 cups unbleached flour

6 Tbsp. sugar

1 Tbsp. salt

4 cups butter flavored oil

1 cup milk

Place all ingredients in a large bowl in order given. Mix until completely incorporated. Divide in eight equal portions and place in 9" pie pans. Press into pans. Flute, prick with a fork. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. This recipe can be used for a two crust pie as well. Roll the pie dough between two pieces of plastic wrap (not waxed paper). Peel the top plastic wrap off and place on pie.

(1 CRUST)

1 ½ cups flour, 2 tsp. sugar, ½ tsp salt, ½ cup oil, and 2 Tbsp. milk



# *Cream Pies*

If Schirer's Restaurant boasts any kind of signature menu item, I suppose it's the cream pies I make daily in the kitchen. I can't, however, take sole credit for their popularity – Viola perfected the formula after finding a similar recipe in Capper's Weekly about 25 years ago. After some tweaking here and there, we came up with a recipe that is both simple and delicious. What's more, it allows for all kinds of variations, depending on your tastes and mood.

By the way, all these pies are topped with a commercial whipped topping.

## *Butterscotch Pie*

To class this up a bit, add 1 cup butterscotch chips to the filling.

2 - 3.4 oz boxes of Butterscotch instant pudding mix

¼ cup powdered sugar

2 cups sour cream

1 ½ cups whole milk

Mix all the ingredients together and fill a baked 9" pie shell.

Refrigerate.

*Notes:*

*Chocolate Fudge Pie*

For a delicious variation, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of chunky or creamy peanut butter.

2 - 3.9 oz boxes of Chocolate Fudge instant pudding mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup powdered sugar

2 cups sour cream

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup crunchy peanut butter

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups whole milk

Mix all the ingredients together and fill a baked 9" pie shell.

Refrigerate.



*Notes:*

## *Chunky Peanut Butter Pie*

2 - 3.4 oz boxes of French Vanilla instant pudding mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup powdered sugar

2 cups sour cream

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chunky peanut butter

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups whole milk

Mix all the ingredients together and fill a baked 9" pie shell.

Refrigerate.

*Notes:*

*Coconut Cream Pie*

2 - 3.4 oz boxes of Coconut Cream instant pudding mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup powdered sugar

2 cups sour cream

1 cup shredded coconut

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups whole milk

Mix all the ingredients together and fill a baked 9 inch pie shell.

Refrigerate.



**My sister Eleanor and me at Monument, Kansas. I was in my freshman year of high school. 1959**



## Creamy Peanut Butter Pie

2 - 3.4 oz boxes of Cheesecake instant pudding mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup powdered sugar

2 cups sour cream

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup creamy peanut butter

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups whole milk

Mix all the ingredients together and fill a baked 9 inch pie shell.

Refrigerate.

*Notes:*

## *Sour Cream Raisin Pie*

This pie is so popular, I can't keep enough in the pie case.

In a sauce pan, place 2 cups raisins, 1 cup brown sugar, and 1 Tbsp. butter. To these ingredients, add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer until the liquid is of the same consistency of pancake syrup. Cool slightly (about 5 minutes). Drain the liquid into a 2-cup measuring cup. Add enough whole milk to make 1 ½ cups.

In a mixing bowl, add:

2 cups sour cream

2 - 3.4 oz boxes French Vanilla instant pudding mix

Cooked raisins

Liquid from raisins and milk

Mix all together and spoon into a baked 9 inch pie shell. Refrigerate.



## *White Christmas Pie*

2 - 3.4 oz boxes of White Chocolate instant pudding mix

¼ cup powdered sugar

2 cups sour cream

1 cup shredded coconut

½ cup white chocolate chips

1 ½ cups whole milk

Mix all the ingredients together and fill a baked 9 inch pie shell.

Refrigerate.



*My college roommate, Andy Davidson, and me at Sterling College 1968*

*Notes:*

# *Fruit Pies*

## *Strawberry Pie*

For years, I used a store-bought, prepared glaze for all my strawberry pies. One Saturday morning, though, I was cleaning strawberries in the kitchen of the Village Café in Alden, when it occurred to me that I could probably make a glaze that held together much more effectively and tasted a whole lot better.

My grocery deliveryman, Byron Johnston, happened to be there, so I asked him if he knew of a good glaze. Byron replied that his wife made the best glaze he'd ever eaten. He quickly telephoned her, and she graciously gave me her strawberry pie glaze recipe.

I have used it exclusively ever since.

1 cup sugar  
3 Tbsp cornstarch  
1 cup cold water  
4 Tbsp strawberry gelatin  
1 quart fresh strawberries

In a microwave-safe bowl, combine sugar, cornstarch and cold water.

Microwave on "high" for 2 minutes. Stir. Microwave another 2 minutes. Stir in strawberry gelatin.

Wash, hull and halve fresh strawberries. Add to gelatin mixture, stirring completely so all the berries are covered with glaze.

Pour into a 9-inch baked pie shell and allow it to cool completely. Top with 8 ounces of prepared whipped topping.



Notes:

## Blackberry, Red Raspberry or Blueberry Pie

- 1 cup sugar
- 3 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 cup water
- 4 Tbsp. raspberry gelatin
- 1 quart of any of the above frozen or fresh berries.

Use the same procedure as for the strawberry pie.

Hint: Wash all the berries if they are fresh. Do not thaw frozen berries.

*Notes:*

*Mandarin Orange Pie*

You know the saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention"? Boy, that's the truth. Many times necessity has forced me to "invent" a dish, never knowing beforehand if it would turn out worthy of human consumption. Fortunately, I got lucky on this one.

I was supposed to take a dessert to a church supper, but I had no strawberries. I looked through my pantry and spotted a can of mandarin oranges. I shrugged my shoulders and gave it a try, making it the same way I would a strawberry pie.

As it turned out, this is a tangy, sweet pie - perfect for the summer.

- 1 cup sugar
- 3 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 cup cold water
- 4 Tbsp. orange gelatin
- 3 - 15 oz. cans of mandarin oranges, drained

Use the same procedure as for a strawberry pie.



Notes:

# Meringue Pies

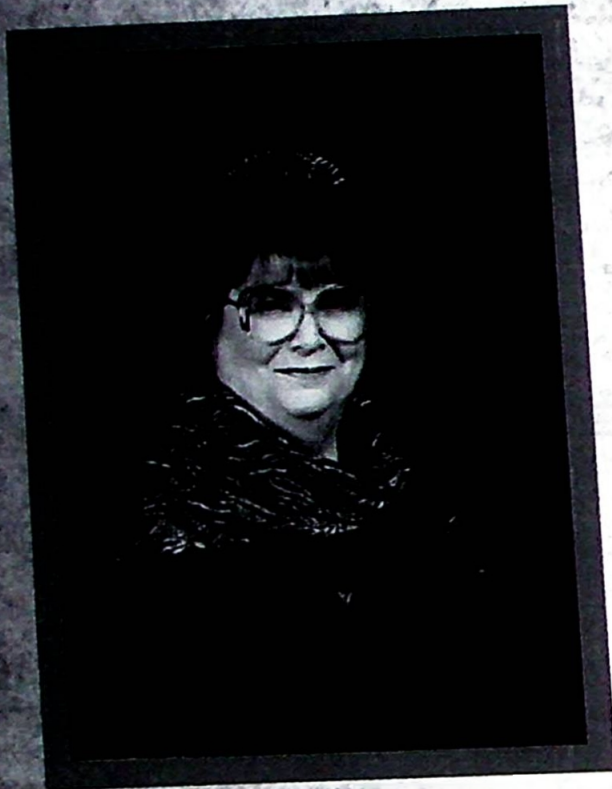
## Meringue

Place 4 egg whites,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar and  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon cream of tartar in a mixing bowl. Whip on "high" speed, gradually adding sugar. Whip until stiff peaks form.

Top pie with meringue and bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes. Cool at room temperature for 1 hour. Refrigerate.

## *Betty's Chocolate Pie*

Betty's mother, Wilma Lash, made a scrumptious Chocolate Meringue Pie. Her recipe was a handful of this and a dash of that. Betty watched her mother make it and wrote down this recipe. We use it at the restaurant when we want meringue on our chocolate pie.



**Betty's church photo  
2001**

### *Chocolate Meringue Pie*

2 cups sugar

½ cup flour

2 Tbsp. cocoa

2 cups milk

2 eggs, separated

1 Tbsp. butter

1 tsp. vanilla

In a microwave safe bowl combine the sugar, flour and cocoa. Add the milk and the egg yolks. Whisk together. Microwave and high for 3 minutes. Whisk again. Microwave for 3 more minutes. Whisk again. Microwave 2 more minutes. Add butter and vanilla and whisk again. Whip egg whites and ¼ tsp. cream of tartar and ¼ cup sugar for the meringue. Place pudding in a baked 9" pie shell and top with meringue. Bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes. Cool at room temperature for 1 hour. Refrigerate.

\*I use 4 eggs so that it creates a larger meringue.



*Bob's Butterscotch Pie*

Bob Wyatt and I grew to be good buddies when both our wives were residents of the Sterling Presbyterian Manor many years ago. Every Sunday afternoon, the Manor would serve cookies and coffee for residents and their families. That's how Bob and I got to know each other - during those Sunday visits with Viola and Bob's wife, Elda.

I learned that Bob's favorite pie was butterscotch meringue. So, on occasion, I would bake one for all of us to share on a Sunday afternoon.

2 cups light brown sugar

½ cup cornstarch

2 cups milk

4 eggs, separated

1 Tbsp. butter

1 tsp. vanilla

¼ tsp. cream of tartar

½ cup sugar

In a microwave safe bowl combine brown sugar and cornstarch. Add milk and egg yolks. Whisk together. Microwave on high for 3 minutes. Whisk again. Microwave another 3 minutes. Whisk again. Microwave another 2 minutes. Whisk in the butter and vanilla. Pour into a baked 9 inch pie shell. Top with meringue.

*Notes:*

## *Veda's Lemon Meringue Pie*

At heart, I'm still the Kansas farm kid raised on a homestead near Newton. I attended a little country school just a mile and a half south of my childhood home, one of only three boys in my class.

I have a lot of fine memories of that school, but one of my fondest is Veda Watts, who cooked for us for 6 ½ years. Every dish she fixed deserved an A+.

I've tried all kinds of lemon meringue pie variations, but I always come back to Veda's recipe. It's simply the best.

I've adapted it for the microwave.

2 cups sugar

½ cup cornstarch

2 cups cold water

4 eggs, seperated

2/3 cup freshly-squeezed lemon juice

1 Tbsp. butter

¼ tsp. cream of tartar

Stir sugar and cornstarch together. Add cold water and egg yolks. Whisk together, then microwave on "high" for 3 minutes. Whisk again. Microwave for 3 more minutes. Whisk again. Microwave 2 more minutes.

Add lemon juice and butter. Whisk again.

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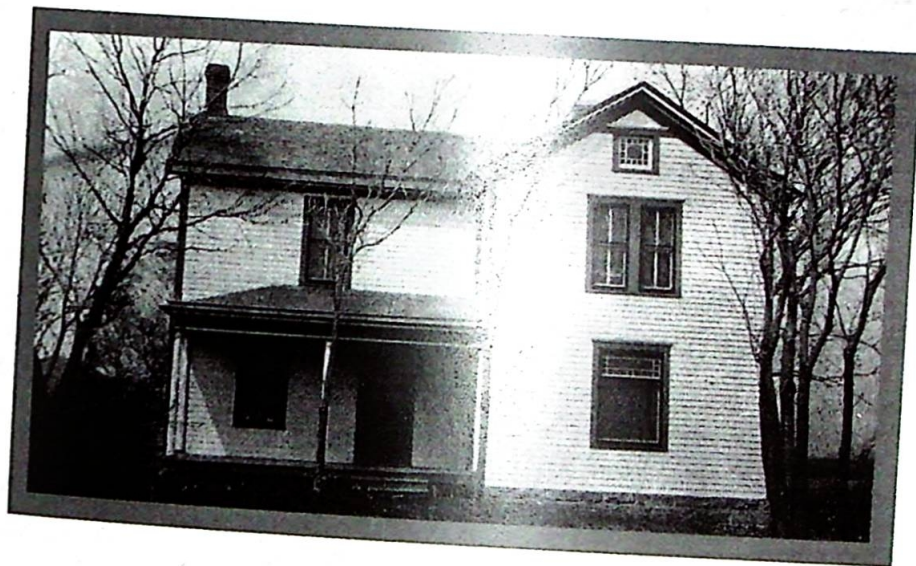


(Veda's Lemon Meringue Pie continued)

While filling is cooking the final 2 minutes in the microwave, make your meringue. Whip until stiff peaks form.

Pour lemon filling into a baked 9 inch pie shell. Top with meringue, making certain that the entire edge of the pie shell is completely sealed with meringue.

Baked in a 350-degree oven for 12 minutes. Cool at room temperature for one hour. Refrigerate.



***My childhood home at rural  
Newton. My grandfather built it  
in 1906.***



# Cooking with Uncle Bob



*your choice:*  
**Red, Green, or  
Yellow**

*vejjeteb'l:*

1. *edible plant. A plant with edible parts, especially leafy or fleshy parts that are used mainly for soups or salads, or to accompany main courses.*

*That's how my computer's Encarta Dictionary describes this next section. I must admit, though, it doesn't make vegetables sound very appetizing.*

*Perhaps that's why we cooks learned to season, sauté and scallop them. Maybe that's the reason we add butter, brown sugar, bacon, apples or pineapple to those "edible parts of plants".*

*Don't get me wrong, I'm not criticizing the Good Lord's work in creating vegetables. I'm just celebrating all the fine things he gave us to improve upon them.*



*Notes:*

*Fried Green Cabbage*

This is especially good. I usually get about 15 servings from this recipe - after all the restaurant employees have sampled it. Lyons High School English teacher Nancy Reed says it's her favorite vegetable dish at Schirer's.

I created this recipe while working as the Dietary Manager at the Good Samaritan Center in Lyons. I fried cabbage one day for lunch, and it went over without too much grumbling from the residents. One elderly gentleman, however, said it would have been especially good if I had used his mother's recipe, which essentially consisted of frying the cabbage in bacon grease.

Well, I tried it - and he was absolutely right. His mother was another of those women who could create wonderful food with whatever's at hand.

2 heads (approximately 5-6 lbs) green cabbage,  
shredded

1 cup butter-flavored oil or melted butter

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup real bacon bits

Place all ingredients on a hot grill. Let cook, stirring occasionally.



*Notes:*

## *Green Bean Variations*

All these bean recipes are the result of direct experimentation and lots of trial and error. You can boil my philosophy of cooking down to one phrase: the easier, the better. Over the years, I've read a multitude of vegetable recipes, and I've simplified nearly every one to meet my own personal needs and the needs of the restaurant. Good taste doesn't have to be complicated.

For every #10 can of green beans use 1 stick (1/4 lb.) butter.

Each can will serve approximately 17 servings.

With Bacon -- add 1/2 cup real bacon bits and 2 TB. ham base.

Almondine -- add 3/4 cup sliced almonds and 1/2 tsp. almond extract.

Lyonnais -- add 1 medium onion that has been thinly sliced and sautéed in butter until golden. Add 1/2 tsp. coarse ground black pepper.

Wax Beans -- Heat a #10 can of wax beans and drain. To the beans add a 16 oz. bottle of ranch cucumber dressing. Toss and serve hot.

For another variation add a 16 oz. bottle of ranch bacon dressing. Toss and serve hot.

*Notes:*

*Harvard Beets*

Harvard University's school color is crimson. So, the way I figure it, that's why this beet dish is named after Harvard. Or, maybe they just serve it in the cafeteria.

2 - #10 cans diced beets, drained - save juice (6 cups)

2 - 20 oz. cans crushed pineapple, undrained

½ cup cornstarch

½ cup sugar

2 Tbsp. Kosher salt

½ tsp. coarse ground black pepper

2 cups cider vinegar

In a saucepan, stir together cornstarch, sugar, salt and pepper. Gradually stir in beet juice and vinegar. Cook, stirring constantly until mixture thickens. Boil and stir for one minute. Stir in beets and pineapple. Heat through. Correct seasoning if necessary. Hold on steamtable while serving.



*Notes:*

## *Red Cabbage*

*Used to be, the ladies of Grace Episcopal Church in Hutchinson would host a wonderful dinner each year to raise money for missions. They eventually published a cookbook, "A Taste of Grace", that featured many of their delectable dishes.*

*One of those recipes, Red Cabbage, grew to become an all-time favorite of mine. I expanded upon the original recipe, but the credit for this creation really goes to those wonderful Ladies of Grace. Many people have enjoyed this dish at Schirer's over the years.*

*A customer of German descent once told me her mother used to make this dish, but without the apples. I've tried it that way, and I can testify that it tastes just as good. She also said the Germans call it "Rot Kohl", but that doesn't sound nearly as appetizing.*

*10 lbs. shredded red cabbage  
8-10 tart red apples, thinly sliced  
6 Tbsp. Kosher salt  
1 ½ cups water  
1 stick (1/4 lb.) butter  
1 ½ cups cider vinegar  
1 ½ cups sugar*

*In a large kettle place all ingredients in order given. Cook over moderate heat until cabbage is reduced by at least 1/3 (about 45 minutes). Stir occasionally. This recipe holds nicely on the steam table. Approximately 20-25 servings.*

*Notes:*

*Scalloped Cabbage*

A dear friend, Bess Kirby, gave me this recipe. She was Viola's matron of honor at our wedding.

6 lbs. green cabbage, shredded, parboiled and drained

8 Tbsp. flour, divided

1 Tbsp. Kosher salt, divided

1 tsp. coarse ground black pepper, divided

½ lb. (2 sticks) butter, sliced, divided

5 cups milk

Place half of the cabbage in a #4 half steamtable pan. Sprinkle cabbage with half of each of the remaining ingredients. Repeat with the other half of the ingredients. Pour milk over cabbage mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 1½ hours. Hold on steamtable while serving. Approximately 20 servings.



Notes:

## Scalloped Spinach

Viola always kept an eye out for interesting recipes during the course of her readings. I don't recall the particular magazine where she found this, but it was originally written for smaller servings. I expanded it for the restaurant.

Personally, I don't care for spinach, but I really like this. You almost don't notice you're eating spinach.

2 (48 oz.) boxes frozen spinach, defrosted and drained  
2 boxes dry onion soup mix  
4 cups sour cream  
1 cup slivered almonds

Drain spinach well. Using a metal strainer press moisture out of spinach. Place all ingredients into a large bowl and mix well. Place into a buttered 4 inch, 1/3 steamtable pan. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

*Notes:*

*Schires' Restaurant  
Scalloped Corn*

This recipe is entirely my own creation, one of my successful efforts at experimentation.

1 - #10 can whole kernel corn, drained  
3 - eggs  
3 cups Ritz cracker crumbs  
4 cups milk  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. Kosher salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. pepper  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar

In a large bowl mix all ingredients together and pour into a #2 buttered steamtable pan. Bake at 350 degrees an hour or until corn is set like a custard.



*Notes:*

## *Sweet Easy Carrots*

This, by far, is the most popular vegetable served at Schirer's Restaurant. The name pretty much says it all.

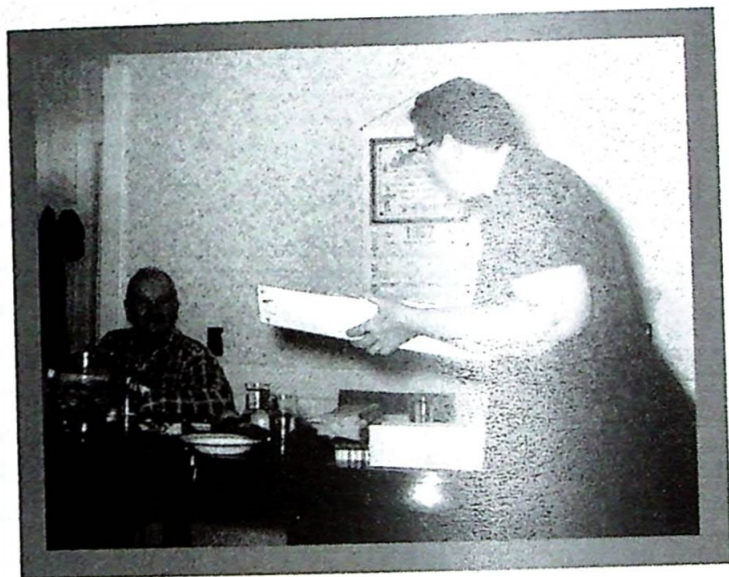
1 - #10 can Belgian carrots

1 cup brown sugar

1 stick ( $\frac{1}{4}$  lb.) butter

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. dill weed

Heat and serve - approximately 17 servings



**Mother and  
Daddy at  
home**



Cooking with Uncle Bob

-54-



# Friends & Family

*Every recipe in this book has a history of sorts. And each history is connected with the memory of a particular person, either directly or indirectly. Without doubt, the person most influential in my life is my mother. She was my first teacher, and she inspired in me an abiding love of cooking. Over the years, though, I've learned from many other teachers who have, in turn, sustained my love of cooking.*

*For Faye, cooking was never just about food. It was a vocation, an act of service to her family, friends, and all the other people who crossed her path each day. That's why these recipes are so dear to me. I learned from her that sharing a meal enriches the act of living.*

*So, too, the bittersweet experience of creating meals from these recipes, collected over the years from loved ones and dear friends. Each recipe enables me to revisit the past. Each flavor, each aroma reminds me of people and places long gone.*

*It's true - good food inspires us to eat, but good people inspire us to cook.*

*Notes:*

## *Aunt Florence's Pumpkin Cake Roll*

I come from a family of talented cooks, and this recipe book would be sorely lacking without my Aunt Florence's Pumpkin Cake Roll. I've served it countless times and always hear good things about it.

Beat 3 eggs for 5 minutes on high speed.  
Gradually beat in 1 cup sugar.  
Stir in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pumpkin, 1 tsp. lemon juice.  
Sift together  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour, 1 tsp. baking powder, 2 tsp. cinnamon, 1 tsp. ginger, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt.

Fold dry ingredients into pumpkin mixture. Spread on greased and floured 15X10X1 pan. Top with 1 cup finely chopped walnuts. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes. Turn out on towel that has been sprinkled with powdered sugar. Roll towel and cake from narrow end. Cool. Unroll. Spread with filling. Roll and chill.

Filling:

1 cup powdered sugar  
2 - 3 oz. pkgs. creamed cheese  
4 Tbsp. oleo  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp vanilla  
Beat until smooth.



Notes:

## Dad's Favorite - Butterscotch Pie

2 cups light brown sugar (packed)

½ cup plus 1 Tbsp. flour

2 cups milk

4 eggs, separated

¼ tsp. cream of tartar

½ cup sugar

1 tsp. vanilla

2 Tbsp. butter

In a microwave safe bowl place the brown sugar and flour. Mix thoroughly. Add the egg yolks and the milk. Whip together. Microwave on high for 3 minutes - 3 minutes - 2 minutes. Stir the filling between each cooking time. After cooking stir in the butter and vanilla. Pour into a 9 inch pie crust.

While the filling is cooking the last 2 minutes whip the egg whites and cream of tartar at high speed in a mixer. Gradually add the sugar until the whites are stiff and hold their shape. Top the filling with the meringue and bake in a 350 degree oven for 12 minutes. Meringue should be a golden brown.



Notes:

## Grandma Schires's English Plum Pudding

In no other country but America could there be a family recipe with this title.

1 egg  
1 cup sorghum  
1 cup sweet milk  
1 cup chopped suet  
1 cup raisins  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cinnamon  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. cloves  
1 scant tsp. soda  
1 tsp. baking powder  
About 3  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour

Mix all dry ingredients; add wet ingredients. Wet and flour a cloth. Add mixture and tie. Steam for 3 hours.



Notes:

## Grandma Wolfe's White Cake

My cousin Harriet's husband had a Grandma Wolfe, who made the most wonderful white cake I've ever tasted. Since Grandma Wolfe measured everything in her hand, Harriet preserved this recipe by watching her make it one day. She followed Grandma around the kitchen and took down precise measurements for each ingredient. That's why we now have Grandma Wolfe's White Cake.

2 cups sugar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter  
1 cup cake flour  
1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups water  
2 cups flour  
1 Tbsp. baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. almond extract  
5 egg whites beaten

Cream together butter and sugar. Stir cake flour into this mixture. Add water and almond extract alternately with the rest of the dry ingredients that have been blended together. Fold in beaten egg whites by hand. Bake at 350 degrees in 2 - 9 inch cake pans that have been greased and floured for 25 minutes. Cool for 5-10 minutes and turn cakes onto racks to finish cooling.



*Notes:*

*Iowa Peach Pudding*

This is another of Mom's recipes. I don't know who originally came up with it, but the creator knew exactly what he or she was doing. As far as comfort food goes, this is about as good as it gets.

2 - 3 oz. pkg. peach gelatin  
1 - 3 oz. pkg. vanilla pudding (not instant)  
3 cups boiling water  
2 cups miniature marshmallows  
1 - 2 ½ can sliced peaches

Bring gelatin, pudding and water to a boil. Add marshmallows and stir until dissolved. Add peaches juice and all. Pour into a 9X13 pan and chill until set. One can also put this recipe in 2 graham cracker pie shells.

**Mother and Daddy  
and the rest of the  
Schirer Clan  
1961**





Notes:

## Jeanne's Sugar Cookies

Jeanne Schirer is my cousin Marion's wife. She should write a cookbook herself. I once entered these cookies in the Kansas State Fair and won a blue ribbon.

1 cup oleo  
1 cup oil  
1 cup powdered sugar  
1 cup granulated sugar

Cream these ingredients together and add:

1 tsp. vanilla  
2 eggs

Sift together and add:

4 cups of flour  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. soda  
1 tsp. cream of tartar

Chill the dough. Ball and roll each ball in granulated sugar, press with the bottom of a glass. Bake 350 degrees for 12 minutes.

*Notes:*

*Johnny Cake*

I never met Viola's father, John Rhoades, but I do have one of his recipes. Appropriately, John was in charge of the "Johnny Cake" whenever his American Legion post served ham and beans.

1 cup yellow cornmeal

1 cup flour

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar

1 cup milk

3 Tbsp. oil

1 Tbsp. baking powder

$\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. salt

Bake at 400 degrees in an oiled 9X9 pan for 20-25 minutes.



## Lenore's Eggless, Milkless, Butterless Cake

Mrs. Lenore Trostle managed the cafeteria when I was a student at Sterling College. She was my mentor, teaching me many of the cooking skills I use to this day. This was her recipe for the "service boys" in the military. It was made without eggs, milk and butter so it could safely be shipped overseas.

2 cups brown sugar  
2 cups raisins  
2 cups hot water  
1 cup lard  
2 tsp. cinnamon  
1 tsp. ground cloves  
1 tsp. ground allspice

Boil these ingredients for 2 minutes and let cool. To this add:

3 ½ cups flour  
2 tsp. soda

Mix well. Bake at 350 degrees in 2 - 9 inch pans about 45 minutes.

Notes:

*Notes:*

*Mabelle's Chocolate Angel  
Food Cake*

My first cousin, Mabelle Veatch, owned a chicken farm in Woodford County, Illinois, and she delivered eggs three times a week to homes throughout Peoria.

She often had eggs that weren't pretty enough to sell, so she'd use them in her angel food cakes and sell the cakes. Her chocolate angel food cake consistently won her prizes in the Illinois State Fair. It also earned me a second place in the Hershey's Cocoa Contest at the Kansas State Fair one year.

1 dozen egg whites, room temperature

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup water

$\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. salt

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cream of tartar

2 cups sugar

1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups cake flour

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup cocoa

Sift flour, cocoa, and 1 cup sugar, and cream of tartar. Set aside. Beat egg whites, water, and salt until foamy. Gradually beat in 1 cup sugar. Fold flour mixture into egg whites. Put into an angel food cake pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes. Invert and cool.

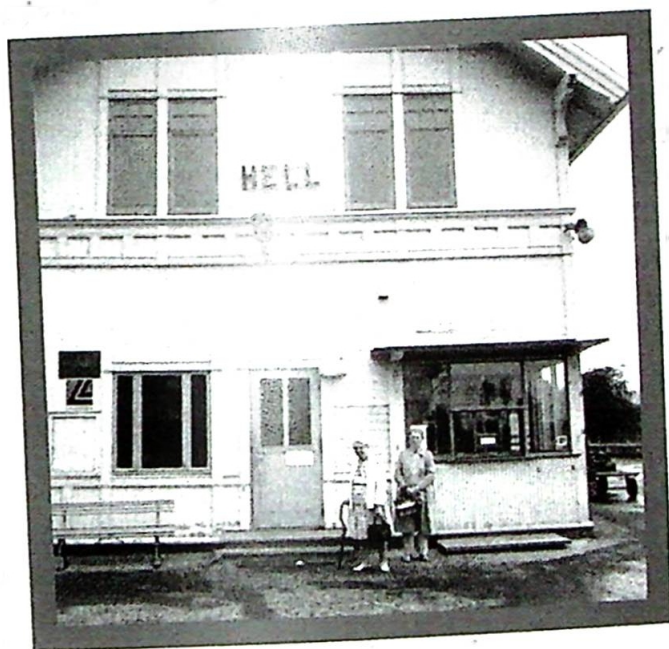


Notes:

## Mabelle's Angel Food Cake

1 dozen egg whites, room temperature  
1/8 tsp. salt  
1 1/2 tsp. cream of tartar  
2 cups sugar  
1 1/2 cups cake flour  
1 tsp. vanilla

Use the same directions as for the Chocolate Angel cake. Add the vanilla with the egg whites.



Aunt Alta  
Schirer (left)  
and her sister  
visting  
Hell, Norway  
1973

*Notes:*

*Mexican Fruit Cake*

This recipe came my way from "Mother Rhoades", via my sister-in-law, Shirley Taylor.

1 - 20 oz. can undrained crushed pineapple  
2 cups flour  
2 cups sugar  
1 cup chopped nuts  
2 tsp. soda  
2 eggs

Mix all ingredients by hand. Put batter in a greased and floured 9X13 cake pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Frost while the cake is still hot with the following recipe.

1 stick margarine  
2 cups powdered sugar  
1-8 oz. pkg. cream cheese  
1 tsp. vanilla



Notes:

## Mildred McAllaster's Sugar Cookies

Mildred McAllaster and I have known each other since the days when we both worked in the Sterling College cafeteria. First, I was her supervisor, then she was my supervisor - and we still managed to remain good friends.

2 cups sugar  
1 cup shortening  
2 eggs  
1 cup sour cream (or rich buttermilk)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. baking soda  
5 cups flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt

Cream shortening and sugar, add eggs slightly beaten, add soda dissolved in sour cream. Then add enough flour sifted with baking powder to make a soft dough. Flavor with grated nutmeg and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. lemon extract or with grated orange peel. Roll on lightly floured board. Cut into shapes and sprinkle with sugar. Bake in 350 degree oven.

*Notes:*

*Mom's Carrot Cake*

Another one from "Mother Rhoades".

2 cups sugar  
1 tsp. soda  
3 cups flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
2 tsp. cinnamon  
1 ½ cups vegetable oil  
1 - 9 oz. can crushed pineapple  
1 tsp. vanilla  
3 eggs  
2 cups grated carrots  
1 cup chopped nuts

Mix dry ingredients together (do not use and electric mixer). Add oil, eggs, carrots, flavoring, nuts and pineapple. Grease and flour a 9X13 cake pan. Add batter to the pan. Bake at 325 degrees for one hour.



Notes:

## Mom's Christmas Pudding

The Schirer family never celebrated Christmas without Mom's Christmas Pudding. This was the absolute highlight of the holiday season. Personally, I haven't prepared it for years. But there's a pretty simple reason - my little sis, Ellie, still makes it every year.

- 1 quart flour (4 cups)
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. allspice
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. cloves
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ lb. suet, chopped
- 1 lb. raisins
- 1 lb. currants or other candied fruit
- 1 tsp. soda in 1½ cups sour milk

Cream suet—work into dry ingredients. Add liquid and fruit. Steam in a buttered mold 2-5 hours or in a pressure cooker according to directions.

Mom used an old angel food cake pan for her mold. It was very blackened with age and use. After the pudding is cooled, it should be refrigerated. Always reheat it by steaming it and serve warm. Top it with sweetened whipped cream or with milk and sugar.

*Notes:*

## *Mom's Delicious Chocolate Cake*

One of my fondest childhood memories was Mom's chocolate cake, with penuche frosting. Great Aunt Helen shared this recipe with Mom, and it was Sunday dessert many times at the Schirer home.

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup shortening  
2 cups sugar  
2 eggs  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cocoa  
2 tsp. vanilla  
3 cups flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt  
2 tsp. soda  
2 cups sour milk or buttermilk

Cream shortening and sugar together. Add eggs one at a time, add vanilla with the last egg, beating after each addition. Sift flour, cocoa and soda together. Add to creamed mixture alternately with the milk. This makes a large recipe, so one needs an 11X14 greased pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes, until cake tests done.

Penuche Frosting Recipe continued on next page.



Notes:

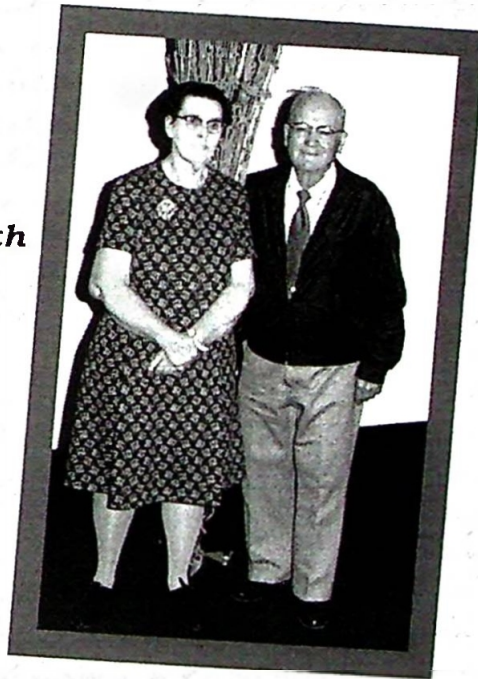
(Mom's Delicious Chocolate Cake Continued)

### *Peneuche Frosting*

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup butter  
1 cup brown sugar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk  
1  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups powdered sugar

Melt butter. Add brown sugar and boil for two minutes. Stir in the milk and bring to a boil. Cool. Add the powdered sugar and beat.

**Mother and Daddy's 45th  
wedding anniversary  
celebration at Sterling  
College**





*Notes:*

*Mom's Meatball Chowder*

This is exactly as she wrote it.

2 lbs. ground beef  
2 tsp. seasoned salt  
 $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. pepper  
2 eggs, slightly beaten  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup finely chopped parsley  
 $\frac{1}{8}$  cup fine cracker crumbs  
2 Tbsp. milk  
3 Tbsp. flour  
1 Tbsp. salad oil

Combine the first 7 ingredients and form into balls the size of walnuts. Roll in flour and brown in hot oil in an 8-10 quart kettle. Add the remaining ingredients (except the corn and add it with 10 minutes to cook). Bring to boil, cover and reduce heat. Cook for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Remaining ingredients:

6 beef bouillion cubes  
6 cups tomato juice  
6 carrots, sliced  
1 can Mexicorn  
3-4 cup celery, sliced  
2-3 potatoes, diced  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup rice  
1 Tbsp. sugar  
4-6 medium onions, cut into  $\frac{1}{8}$ 's  
6 cups water  
2 bay leaves  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  - 1 tsp. marjoram



## Mom's Sour Cream Chocolate Cake

Notes:

Mom's recipe for Sour Cream Cake was wonderful, and this is hers - exactly as it was written on her own recipe card. As you can see, you'll have to figure out the pan and baking time on your own.

Personally, I bake it 30 minutes in a 9X13 greased and floured pan. It works for me, so it should work for you, too.

2 cups sour cream

2 cups sugar

3 eggs, separated

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup cocoa dissolved in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup boiling water

1 tsp. vanilla

3 cups flour

Pinch of salt

2 tsp. soda

Beat well sugar, cream, egg yolks, salt and vanilla.

Add and mix in 2 cups flour. Then add cocoa mixture and remaining flour with soda. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Bake in a moderate (350 degree) oven until done.

*Notes:*

*Mrs. Docking's Ginger Cookies*

My recipe book wouldn't be complete without Mrs. Docking's Ginger Cookies. My mother clipped this recipe from the Capper's Weekly and baked these cookies nearly every week.

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup shortening  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup molasses  
1 cup sugar  
1 egg  
2 cups flour  
2 tsp. soda  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cloves  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. ginger  
1 tsp. cinnamon

Blend shortening, sugar, molasses and egg. Add dry ingredients and mix well. Roll into balls the size of walnuts, then roll in sugar. Place on a greased cookie sheet and bake 8-10 minutes in a 375 degree oven. Do not overbake.

Note: These are not a gingersnap, they are a very moist cookie.



Notes:

## Potato Salad

My mom made the best potato salad I ever tasted. One ingredient that she never put in her potato salad was pickles and naturally I followed suit. She always made hers with left over boiled potatoes. Since I always have baked potatoes remaining at the end of the day I started making mine with those. My own recipe has changed slightly over the years.

- 9 cooled baked potatoes, shredded\*
- 1 ½ tsp. dill weed
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 ½ Tbsp. sugar
- 3 cups real bacon bits or 12 hard boiled eggs, diced
- 2 Tbsp. brown spiced mustard
- 2 ½ cups mayonnaise
- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 large onion, diced

\*I use 90 count potatoes (90 potatoes to a 50 lb. box).



*Notes:*

*Ruth's Rum Rolls*

Ruth was the wife of Ralph Kams, my high school agriculture teacher. We country boys used to take sack lunches to school and eat with Mr. Kams during the noon hour. Every Christmas season, Ruth would make rum rolls for our dessert.

1 cup vanilla wafer crumbs  
1 cup pecans, crushed  
1 cup powdered sugar  
2 Tbsp. cocoa  
1 Tbsp. corn syrup

Mix well. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup rum. Roll in balls and roll balls in powdered sugar. Let stand in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

**Aunt Alta and  
I arriving  
in Russia  
on the S.S. Bore  
in June 1973**





Notes:

## Summertime Salad

Way back in the summer of 1973, I accompanied my Aunt Alta Schirer on a package tour of Russia and Scandinavia. There were 33 other people on that tour, and I became good friends with two of them - Ken and Fran Dingman of Michigan.

Later that summer, I traveled to Central Michigan University for a food supervisors' conference. On the way home, I stopped by the Dingmans for a visit, and Fran served this salad for lunch. It is absolutely wonderful.

This recipe was actually one of my dad's favorites. He always insisted that this dish would taste just as good in the winter.

- 1 - 3 oz. pkg. of lime gelatin
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup boiling water
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1 - 9 oz. can crushed pineapple
- 1 cup creamed cottage cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped walnuts
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup diced celery
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Cool slightly, then stir in evaporated milk. Chill until thick, not firm. Fold in remaining ingredients. Pour into mold. Serves eight.

*Notes:*

## *Veda's Poppy Seed Cake*

My siblings and I each attended Gem Country School for eight years. During much of that time, Veda Watts cooked for the 25 to 30 students. Once or twice a year, Veda would prepare this delicious treat for our dessert. Three of these cakes would usually feed the entire student body.

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup of poppy seeds  
1 cup of milk  
2 cups flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
Scant  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup shortening  
1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt  
1 tsp. vanilla  
4 egg whites

Soak seeds in milk for 3-4 hours. Cream shortening and sugar together. Sift dry ingredients together. Add dry ingredients and milk alternately. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Bake in 2 - 9 inch greased and floured baking pans at 350 degrees about 25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

(continued on next page)



Notes:

(Poppy Seed Cake Continued)

Filling:

- 4 egg yolks
- 2 cups of milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 3-4 Tbsp. cornstarch
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- Pinch of salt

Mix dry ingredients. Add well beaten egg yolks, stir in scalded milk and cook in a double boiler for 15 minutes. Fill cake.

Ice the top and sides of cake with the following:

- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 2 Tbsp. cocoa
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 ½ cups powdered sugar

Notes:

## Waffles (Hamilton-Beach style)

In 1949, my Dad won a drawing at the Old Settlers Picnic at Halstead. His prize was a Hamilton-Beach electric mixer that came with a recipe book. The waffle recipe in that book quickly became a Schirer family favorite.

2 eggs, separated  
1 ½ cups flour  
¾ tsp. salt  
2 tsp. baking powder  
2 Tbsp. sugar  
1 cup milk  
¼ cup melted butter

Beat egg whites until stiff. Sift dry ingredients together. Add milk, yolks, and butter to dry ingredients. Beat one minute. Fold in egg whites. Bake on a waffle iron.



## Friends & Family



**Visiting Viola at the Sterling  
Presbyterian Manor  
1999**



**The Schirer family  
in 1961  
(I'm at the far right)**





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"Happy Cooking!"

- Bob